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The Historical Curriculum in Colleges

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THE HISTORICAL CURRICULUM IN COLLEGES

The nature and sequence of the historical studies to be pursued in college constitute, at first sight, a distinct and well-defined subject of discussion. More attentive consideration, however, will show that, as is usually the case, this topic is closely bound up with a number of others. It is not possible, for example, to reach satisfactory conclusions as to what we shall study without considering why and how we shall study, so that questions concerning the content of historical instruction inevitably lead to questions involving its method and purpose. Furthermore, the historical curriculum in any particular institution is in large measure determined by the general course of study, the problem varying according as we are dealing with an elective curriculum, a prescribed course, or a group system, and in regard to these matters the practice of American colleges seems hopelessly at variance. Then, too, the college program of studies in history depends in an increasing degree upon the historical curriculum of the secondary school and also conditions the historical work of the graduate school; indeed in the present transitional stage of educational organization in America there is a constant overlapping of these three grades of institutions, so that it is exceedingly difficult and sometimes impossible to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the different grades of instruction. However closely we seek to limit ourselves, however much we take for granted, we shall still find that no thoroughgoing discussion of the historical curriculum is possible which does not consider a large number of related topics. Fortunately, however, an exhaustive or definitive treatment of the theme is not now called for. The historical curriculum is still in process of evolution, and its final form is not yet discernible. Indeed, strictly speaking, there is no historical curriculum, for every college is working at its own problems in its own way; and where conditions vary so widely and experimentation is proving so fruitful, uniformity of practice is neither desirable nor attainable.

A generation ago there was little or no systematic instruction

in history in American colleges, and what there was could certainly not be dignified with the name of an historical curriculum. The course of study of that time aimed to cover in some fashion the whole range of human knowledge and to give a general view of every important subject. In so comprehensive a plan there was obviously small room for history, and if history was taught at all it was universal history of a very compendious sort. A term or two of a book like Swinton's *Outlines* or Freeman's *General Sketch*, a term in the senior year devoted to Guizot's *History of Civilization*, perhaps another term on the Constitution of the United States, may be taken as representing fairly the amount of time given to history in most of our institutions of learning. Often the body of instruction was much less; the late Herbert Adams used to say that when he was a student at Amherst the course in history, except as the subject was treated in connection with the classics, consisted of one lecture given by the president toward the close of the senior year on the philosophy of history. Professorships of history scarcely existed, indeed could hardly be justified by so meagre a body of instruction.

How all this has been changed is a matter of familiar knowledge. Various influences have had their share—the breakdown of the traditional curriculum, the example of European schools, the historical spirit of the age, the growth of the civic sense, and so on,—until to-day every reputable college has at least one professor of history and a fair offering of historical courses, while the largest of our historical departments have as many as eight or nine instructors whose whole time is given to history. The problems of the historical curriculum are obviously somewhat different in large and in small departments, yet certain fundamental questions are sure to arise in every college, and it is to these common matters that our attention may most profitably be directed.

In our day and generation every undergraduate has a right to demand of his college the opportunity to get a systematic course of instruction in the history of the world at large and of his own country. Whether this shall be made an obligation as well as an opportunity by requiring a certain amount of historical study on his part, is a question that depends largely upon the extent to which the college lays down specific requirements for

its students; but if any subjects are to be prescribed it is difficult to see why history should not be one of them. The main point, however, is that a substantial body of historical instruction should be offered, and that any student who so desires should be left free to follow a prolonged course of historical study. All will not desire extended work in history, but it may be asserted in general that all students ought to have some history, most ought to have a good deal, and some ought to be encouraged to specialize in this department.

Historical study in college ought to begin not later than the sophomore year, as the great majority of colleges now permit, and, especially in view of the small amount of historical training which most students have had in school, there is no valid reason why history may not be taken in the freshman year. This is now possible at several representative institutions, such as Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Columbia, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, the University of Pennsylvania, Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, Bryn Mawr, Western Reserve, Tulane, the University of Chicago, Leland Stanford, and the universities of Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Texas, and California. It is, of course, easier to arrange for freshman work in history under an elective or group system than under a system of prescribed freshman studies, where the competition of departments for a place on the freshman program is unusually keen, but it is noteworthy that the institutions which do not permit their students to begin history at the opening of the college course are generally those which give small recognition to history as an entrance subject.

The range and variety of the historical instruction offered in colleges will naturally depend in large measure upon the available teaching force. It may be taken for granted that courses should be provided in ancient history, the history of the Middle Ages and of modern Europe, English history, and American history; and even a single professor can, as far as the number of hours of teaching is concerned, by proper arrangement and alternations find time for giving all these subjects. How far courses in these various fields may profitably be multiplied and subdivided is a matter which each institution must decide for itself, provided always that it remains possible for the ordinary undergraduate to get a fairly satisfactory survey of the general

field of history without devoting an unreasonable amount of time to the subject. I am aware that in recent years there has been a large introduction into the undergraduate curriculum of the necessarily special and often technical courses of the graduate school—that one university actually offers to its undergraduates nine separate courses on the works of Victor Hugo, that another opens to them twenty-nine courses in what it calls sociology, and that stray courses on Roman lamps or the Chinese alphabet, on the play instinct and the pedagogy of the Gospels, may reward the curious perusal of college catalogues—; but I cannot see that departments of history have as yet suffered seriously from such vagaries. There is a large range of subjects of great historical importance and profound human interest in which courses may profitably be given to undergraduates, and it is highly desirable that students should have an opportunity to supplement their more general and necessarily rapid courses by deeper acquaintance with some significant period or set of institutions—by some more “intensive study,” if that phrase is preferred. What subjects are offered matters little, provided they are really significant and are treated in a large way. The Roman Empire, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Stuart period in England, the rise of Prussia, the French Revolution, the history of colonization, the era of reconstruction, the diplomatic history of the United States,—these are examples of a great number of subjects which are entirely suited to the purposes of undergraduate instruction, if the instructor is competent and the library facilities are adequate. After the fundamental general courses in the great fields of history have been provided, the choice of these more special subjects should be determined largely by the training and tastes of the instructor. If a man’s heart is in the Renaissance, let him seek to fill his students with the Renaissance, and not try to pump up interest in fields which he finds uncongenial.

The development of “historical-mindedness” involves the training of the judgment and the critical sense, as well as the stimulating of the imagination and the widening of the sympathies; and if, toward the close of his undergraduate course, the serious student can have the benefit of a seminary or practice course in history, so much the better. “The nature of the historical method is to understand by investigation,” says Droysen,

and the senior year is none too early to learn this by actual experience. To face an historical problem squarely, to sift the materials carefully, and to draw one's own conclusions from a careful examination of the available body of evidence, is not only sound historical method, but most valuable general training. Of course, a well-trained student will have learned something of the nature and uses of historical sources long before his senior year, but in a special course it is possible for him to go farther and really work some limited subject to the bottom, and by standing for once on the solid ground of contemporary evidence take a long step toward intellectual independence. Such work need not be original research, but it ought to be independent study. A field should be selected for which the material, while sufficient and varied, is not beyond the student's powers, either as regards its difficulty or its amount, and such topics chosen as afford a real insight into the period as well as into the processes of historical study.

As regards the sequence of historical subjects in college, I believe that as a general principle the order of chronological development should be followed where possible, and that a general view of the field of history should ordinarily precede courses on special periods or movements. Such a view of history cannot, however, be advantageously given in a single course, but requires two or three years of consecutive study. If our students brought to college any such acquaintance with the field of history as is possessed by the graduates of German *gymnasias* or French *lycées*, they might profitably begin at once with more intensive courses, but such, unfortunately, is far from being the case. In spite of the rapid advances in historical instruction in schools, it still remains true that the average freshman carries with him but a small viaticum of historical knowledge or training, and that his acquaintance with the world's history must for the most part still be gained in college. A general view of the development of civilized life is what he has the right, first of all, to demand, only this must not be so rapid as to render impossible any real understanding of the times studied.

I am also of the opinion that historical instruction in college should be progressive, that the earlier courses should serve in method as well as in subject-matter as an introduction to the later and, within reasonable limits, be made prerequisites

for them. This principle is well recognized in other departments, and while it is true that the dependence of one field upon another is not so close in history as in most other subjects, it is also true that there is an historical way of looking at things and a training in the use of historical materials which can only be learned from historical study. This holds good independently of the particular period of history dealt with, but its force is naturally much greater if the chronological order of courses be followed. To ignore this is to miss a large part of the purpose of historical teaching, and to attempt to teach such things anew in every course involves a large amount of wasteful repetition. If our introductory courses give nothing which we desire to demand as a condition of more advanced study, so much the worse for them.

This leads to the consideration of a topic of fundamental importance in the historical curriculum, namely, the first year of college work in history. What do we seek to accomplish in the first historical course in college? Is it the acquisition of a certain modicum of general information regarding historical events and personages, or a certain number of general ideas regarding the course of history, or a certain amount of training in the use of historical material? To a certain extent all these aims are legitimate, though any one of them seems to me inadequate. Our primary purpose should be to introduce the student to the college study of history in such a way as will prepare him to go farther if he so desires, but will also give him something of substantial value in case his formal study of history stops at this point. An introductory course of this sort ought to afford a view of a large section of the world's history—a field large enough to give an idea of the growth of institutions and the nature of historical evolution, yet not so extensive as to render impossible an acquaintance at close range with some of the characteristic personalities and conditions of the times—; it should also demand a freer use of material than is possible in the secondary school, and convey some notion of the purposes and processes of historical study.

If now we turn to examine what is actually done in the introductory courses of American colleges, we find the greatest diversity prevailing. Courses in universal history, ancient history, mediæval history, general European history, English history,

recent European history, and American history all appear, either alone or in a variety of combinations. Nevertheless it is possible to reduce these to a few general types which we may briefly consider.

The best example of a course in universal history is probably that given to freshmen or sophomores at Columbia University (History A, three times a week). The scope of this course is sufficiently indicated by its title, "Epochs of ancient, mediæval, and modern history, with special reference to forms of government and changes in social conditions," the student being conducted, on the basis of a carefully prepared syllabus, from the nations of the ancient Orient to the beginning of the twentieth century. The plan of study is worked out more carefully than that of any similar course with which I am acquainted; but in spite of the great popularity which they once enjoyed in colleges, courses of this type now survive in comparatively few of the better institutions. The giving of a general survey of the world's history is an object which ought always to be kept in mind in framing an historical program, but it seems to be one of the few well-established results of the experience of college teachers of history that this cannot be profitably accomplished in a single year. The skilful teacher may do much to save such courses from becoming an arid list of names and dates on the one hand or a mass of unassimilated generalizations on the other, but the pace is inevitably too rapid to permit of satisfactory results.

If more than one year is to be spent in covering the general field of history, it would seem at first sight that the work of the first year should be devoted to ancient history. This was for long the practice at the University of Wisconsin, and still obtains at Johns Hopkins and the University of Indiana (where the group system lends itself naturally to such an arrangement), at Tulane, and at the University of Iowa, while ancient history appears as an alternative with other periods at Cornell, Wisconsin, Kansas, Smith, and Leland Stanford. While, however, a course in ancient history not only has chronological convenience in its favor, but is excellently adapted to elementary instruction by reason of its relative simplicity and the abundance of accessible material, it has never been popular as a beginners' course. Ancient history as a freshman study suffers from the fact that

it constitutes the historical preparation which most students bring to college, and hence lacks the freshness and stimulating power of less familiar fields. Moreover, it is a singular commentary upon the teaching of the classics in this country that, with all the time and money spent upon them and the special advantages which they have enjoyed, so few scholars have been produced of the type of W. F. Allen and Gurney and so little has been done to create interest in ancient history. Teachers of history have generally been deficient in technical training, and teachers of classics have been deficient in vital historical interests; and ancient history has fallen between the two. More hopeful signs have recently begun to appear, but it is still true that the condition of ancient history among us is distinctly discreditable to American scholarship.

A more popular type of introductory course consists of a general survey of the history of mediæval and modern Europe. This commonly begins with the Roman Empire or the Germanic invasions, but there is no uniformity of practice with regard to the point at which it should close. At Princeton (where the course occupies but one semester) and at Yale the end is set at 1870; at Brown, 1815; at Dartmouth and Northwestern, 1789; at Michigan and Vassar, the eighteenth century; at Wellesley and Bryn Mawr, 1648. The old introductory course at Harvard, History 1, an early example of this type, extended to the beginning of the eighteenth century. A course of this sort has many obvious merits. It takes the student on from the point which he has ordinarily reached in his preparation for college, gives him a broad view of European development, and furnishes a good basis for the subsequent study of American and later European history. But if it has many of the advantages, it has also some of the disadvantages of a course in universal history. It covers a vast extent of ground and leaves little time for assimilation or collateral work, and the results are often unsatisfactory. Accordingly, some important institutions devote the whole year to the Middle Ages, thus securing time for more thorough study and more careful training, and at the same time laying a substantial foundation for later work in the modern period and in American history. Such is now the plan followed at Cornell, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and California, and the experiment will be tried next year at Harvard.

A general course in English history is also a possibility for the first year of college work, covering as it does a long stretch of time and enabling the student to follow a significant line of historical development without the confusing complications of the Continent. Such a course existed for some time at the University of Michigan, and is still found at Vanderbilt; while it is offered as an alternative with other historical subjects at Wisconsin, California, Leland Stanford, Kansas, Bowdoin, Smith, and Wellesley. The University of Minnesota has for many years maintained a successful beginners' course devoted to the constitutional history of England to the accession of the House of Hanover, accompanied by a brief survey of continental history. It is undoubtedly possible to introduce students to European history on the English as well as on the continental side, and if sufficient attention is paid to contemporary affairs on the Continent many of the same results may be reached; but something of the largeness of the field is lost in this way, and there is always the danger of getting an insular and Anglo-centric view of history which we need especially to avoid.

Mention should also be made of the introductory course given at the University of Nebraska, although any adequate consideration of it belongs to the discussion of methods of teaching rather than of programs.¹ This course occupies four hours a week throughout the year, and is required of all students entering the department without previous training. One of these weekly hours is given to general lectures, beginning with Greek history and coming down to the close of the last century, and another hour to a systematic exposition of the methods of historical investigation. For the third hour the class is divided into sections for the study of extracts from the sources, ancient and mediæval material being used, and for the fourth hour it is cut up into groups of half a dozen for quiz. All this is accompanied by the preparation of note-books and papers and a fixed amount of work in the library, the whole being expected to require, for the majority of the students, eight hours weekly outside of the classroom. It is plain that while this is in a sense a course in universal history, its most characteristic features are the careful organization and supervision of the work, and the

¹ This account is condensed from a description of the course which Professor Fling has had the kindness to send me.

emphasis placed upon the processes of historical study rather than upon its generally accepted results; and the methods employed are equally applicable, or equally inapplicable, to any period of history.

So far we have assumed that each college shall maintain but one introductory course in history. Recently, however, a marked tendency has become manifest in some of our larger universities to offer a number of parallel courses for beginners in historical study. Thus Kansas, Leland Stanford, and Smith give both ancient and English history; Wellesley and Bowdoin, English and general European; Ohio State University, general European and American. At Cornell the courses open to freshmen comprise Oriental history, Greek and Roman, and mediæval; at Wisconsin, ancient, mediæval, English, and the history of the nineteenth century; at California, ancient, mediæval, English, and early Hebrew history; at the University of Pennsylvania, mediæval history, the nineteenth century, and three courses in American history. Besides offering a wider range of choice, such a system has the advantage of splitting up the large body of first-year students into groups of more convenient size, and permitting an easier adjustment between college and preparatory work for students who have had extensive preparatory training in history. On the other hand, it breaks down any uniformity of preparation for advanced courses, and destroys the unity and co-ordination of the historical curriculum. By admitting beginners to all courses alike, each course is kept at the elementary level, so that a student may study history for some years without really advancing, and if the attempt is made to avoid this by restricting the number of elementary courses which may be taken, it becomes impossible for the ordinary student to get a general view of history. Until our students come to college with a more comprehensive and thorough training in history than they now have, it seems unwise to give up the ideal of a progressive series of related courses.

It is certainly significant that with the exception of the alternatives offered at the University of Pennsylvania and the Ohio State University and a brief course at the University of Chicago, no college, so far as I have learned, places American history among its introductory courses, and that in a large number of institutions a course in European history is made a

prerequisite for the study of American history. In spite of wide differences in other respects, there would seem to be general agreement that some sort of a course in European history is the best introductory course for college students.

It would, no doubt, be worth while to investigate more thoroughly the practice of each institution and bring together the experience of historical departments with regard to their introductory courses, but the general summary which has been given must suffice. In the presence of so much diversity it would certainly be rash to insist that any one type of course is clearly the best. Conditions vary widely in different parts of the country and in different sorts of institutions, and the problem is becoming more complicated with the rapid extension of historical study in secondary schools, so that at the present stage of development dogmatic conclusions are peculiarly out of place. As matters stand in the colleges which I know best, my present inclination is toward a general course on the history of the Middle Ages as likely to be best adapted to the needs of the first year. It may be that I am attracted to this solution of the problem because this is almost the only type of course which I have not taught to freshmen, and that my confidence will pass away with experience; but there is much to be said for beginning with a year's work on the Middle Ages. The field is broad, but not too vast for a single course, and the student who comes to college from his preparatory study of ancient history is introduced to a new world, full of action and movement and color, and kept in touch with it long enough to get some knowledge of its characteristic life and some apprehension of its relations to the institutions and culture of modern times. It is significant that most of the introductory courses now given devote considerable time to the Middle Ages, the only points of difference being whether the emphasis shall be English or Continental and whether some or all of the modern period shall also be included.

The extent of the field to be covered in the first year's course in history depends in some degree upon the methods of teaching employed, and these in turn are in large measure conditioned by the number of students in the class. The beginning class in history is sure to be relatively large in any institution, and at Harvard and Yale it has already passed four hundred. At the same time college authorities have rarely reached the

point where they are willing to spend as much upon courses of this sort as upon elementary instruction in language, mathematics, and science, and the effective handling of large courses in history has in many places become a serious problem. I cannot discover that there is any very general satisfaction with existing methods of conducting such courses, but there seems to be a growing realization that these large classes have come to stay, and a serious effort is being made to adjust our machinery of instruction to them.

We are thus brought back to the point from which we started, namely, that it is impossible to consider what we shall teach without considering how we shall teach, or to discuss the historical curriculum without some regard to matters of general educational policy. At the same time let us beware of putting our trust in curricula or in any pedagogical devices. A good teacher with a poor curriculum is vastly better than a poor teacher with a good curriculum, and in time the good teacher's curriculum is likely to improve. History is larger than the most comprehensive course of study, and its influence upon the students of our colleges ought to be much wider than our formal historical instruction. That one lecture of President Seelye to the Amherst seniors proved of more value than many courses, for it decided Herbert Adams to devote his life to the study of history, and thus indirectly affected all who came under his fructifying influence. Inspiration is a large element in good historical teaching, and an important part of our function as college teachers of history will be left undone unless we encourage our students to read liberally, stimulate them to do something for themselves beyond what is required, and develop in them some abiding interest in historical studies. Courses are good, but history is better.

Prof. Marshall S. Brown, of New York University, opened the discussion. He said:

It is impossible to study the catalogues of representative colleges of our section of the country without being impressed by the fact that there is a decided absence of a consensus of opinion and practice as to the place of history in these colleges.

Wishing to ascertain what the present practice is, I have examined the catalogues of twenty-one colleges of the Middle

States and Maryland, including in the number small and medium-sized colleges, as well as the college departments of the great universities. Of these twenty-one colleges, seventeen require the student to take some history in order to fully qualify for the bachelor's degree, while in four the degree may be obtained without any history.

Four of these institutions make history a prescribed course in the freshman year, while eleven make it possible for the student to begin the study of history in that year. Of this number several of the smaller colleges make no provision for the continued study of the subject throughout the four years of the college course; in at least one case no history is given after the sophomore year. Ten of the twenty-one have no courses in history open to freshmen; six of these ten allow or require the student to begin its study in the sophomore year, while four make no provision for historical courses before the junior year.

There is a similar lack of conformity as to the subject of the introductory course. Seven of these colleges require the student to begin his historical study with the Middle Ages, five with ancient history, three with ancient, mediæval, and modern history, and two with English history.

The personnel of the teaching staff in history in the colleges of our section, is on the whole, adequately trained and well qualified for its work. Hence the first problem for the college is not, as in the school, to secure well-trained and skilled teachers of history, but to establish the place of history in the curriculum, which, as I understand it, is the important and worthy subject of our present discussion.

I have gained the impression, although it is impossible fully to verify it, that in some of our colleges courses in history occupy places in the curricula which are determined not by careful consideration of where they ought to go, but by the practical limitations of the time schedule and teaching force, and by such influences as the prescriptive right of older-established subjects to positions in certain terms or years. So it is but fair to say that the status in a given college may not represent the views of the teachers of history of that faculty.

Before we can decide what courses shall be offered and where they shall be placed, we must determine what the purpose of history instruction in the college is; for the problem

differs materially if the object be to develop historical scholars and investigators, rather than to increase the culture of the average student. A very small proportion of college students become trained investigators in the historical field, and a decided minority only of the whole number pursue the more advanced historical courses of the college. The good of the greatest number should be sought in planning the work of the course. It seems to me too obvious to demand proof that the large general or prescribed courses in history (and I heartily agree with Professor Haskins that these constitute the problem of the college historical curriculum) should be handled primarily from the standpoint of culture, and conducted for the benefit of the majority, who do not purpose to follow the more advanced courses. One of the evils of our present system is the tendency of college instructors to regard the scholarship and ability in research of a few seniors as the end for which the department exists. It is a legitimate end, but, I submit, should not be the chief end of college historical instruction. In the general or introductory course, then, a twofold purpose must be kept in view: first and foremost the broadening and deepening of the culture of the average student; second, the laying of a foundation of historical information upon which to base a further and more specialized course of historical study, *i. e.*, it must be treated both as an end in itself and as a preparation for further study.

This twofold end of the general course introduces the question as to the position of the course in the curriculum. Regarded as a culture course alone, doubtless the junior year would be the most advantageous time, but as the disciplinary and preparatory nature of the course must be considered as well, the practice of the majority of the colleges of placing it in the freshman or sophomore year must be held the correct one.

If culture is to be the main end of our introductory course, it follows that the subject should be taught, not by the youngest tutor or instructor, but by the experienced professor of broad culture and ripe scholarship. The inexperienced instructor, fresh from an extended course of study in his specialty, would be relatively much more valuable in advanced courses, where smaller numbers of specially interested students pursue investigations in limited fields.

It is so important that the student should have the best possible instruction in this culture course that it may be advisable, in the small college, to have any one of several fields covered, according to the particular bent or ability of the professor. Practically, I would narrow the range of choice to the subjects: general history, with or without ancient history; mediæval history; and English history. I would exclude the history of the United States, because it has been more generally and perhaps better taught in the schools than the subjects named, and because European history, covering, as it does, a wider and, on the whole, a richer field, contains more of culture value. Moreover, European history is a necessary foundation for further historical study.

At least one general culture course in history should be prescribed for every college student, as an essential requirement for the bachelor's degree. We have gone too far in the American college in regarding work as valuable only as it prepares for something specific beyond: law, medicine, advanced or graduate work, or, indeed, anything that will directly assist in bread-winning. The idea of culture for its own sake should be restored in our colleges. Our subject—history—is pre-eminently fitted to advance this end by interpreting through the broadest and most scholarly men of the historical department the race experience of the past.

The discussion of Professor Haskins's paper was further continued by Prof. J. Montgomery Gambrill, of the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute.

In discussing the history curriculum of the college, it is necessary to consider the general aim of historical study and the amount of historical training prior to entrance. The purposes of historical study, which I need not attempt to enumerate now, can, I believe, be realized more fully by the college than by the lower schools. For example, training of the judgment and the critical sense is always named among the aims of historical study; a bare beginning in this may be made in elementary work; some very useful training may be given in the high school; but in the college results of real maturity may be secured by proper methods. The three curricula should form a kind of spiral.

I am convinced of the importance of requiring at least an outline knowledge of the whole course of general history prior to taking up the intensive work of the college. If it is impracticable to require this, then the college should offer entirely different courses for those who have pursued such a course as recommended by the Committee of Seven, and for those who have barely enough historical training to enter. The student who attempts the study of a special period or topic without some knowledge of the general course of history will find it impossible to understand fully its connections and its significance and thus fail to realize its full benefits. Moreover, many of the allusions and comparisons that must be met in reading will be meaningless to him. I am of the further opinion that in our just contempt for drill, "grind," dynastic annals, and "drum and trumpet" history, we are in danger of allowing the reaction to carry us too far. Upon a basis of "mere facts" the really important work in history must be built, and if the foundations are sandy, how can the superstructure be other than insecure?

It seems to me eminently proper to specialize in the college work, but it should be intensive as to subjects, as well as to periods of time. As an example, the subject of federal government, studied in its historical development from ancient times to the present, and possibly based upon the little work by John Fiske, called *American Political Ideas*, would be fully as fruitful in every way as the study of some important epoch in English or general history. An element of special timeliness and contemporaneous interest might be given to such topics. For instance, the present war in the East might be the occasion for studying the whole question of the struggle between Eastern and Western civilization, from Marathon to the present, with the interesting but difficult problem of just what each combatant in the present struggle represents.

The key to the solution of the problem, so far as there is a key, will be found when we have determined what the secondary school can and should do for its pupils before they begin the work of the college. The subject of a college curriculum in history is only a part of the larger problem of history courses in all the schools,—elementary, secondary, and collegiate,—and its possibilities must depend in great measure upon what are found to be the possibilities of the other two.

The discussion was closed by the Secretary, who rose to ask several questions:

It has been assumed in the discussion thus far that the teachers in the colleges are "well trained." Is this so? Do their students think that they are well trained? Are they trained to acquire knowledge or to impart it? Where classes are not interested in the work, is it because of "original sin"? Do classes ever fail to be interested when the content of the course is of prime historical importance? Should the course itself appeal to the members as having real value? In a word, are the methods of presentation and the content of the course sufficiently defined in the discussion thus far?



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